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SIPDIS

FOR EUR/CARC

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ENRG](#) [IR](#) [AF](#) [AM](#) [AJ](#)

SUBJECT: AZERBAIJAN: PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR ON  
NK, TURKEY-ARMENIA, ARM SALES AND BLOGGERS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Donald Lu  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Novruz Mammadov, meeting December 3 with EUR/CARC Office Director Ethan Goldrich, had kind words of support for President Obama's December 1 speech and the Afghanistan mission. Azerbaijan, based on Turkey's assurances, sees a link between Turkey-Armenia normalization efforts and Nagorno-Karabakh resolution. Azerbaijan has been quiet about developments over the summer and fall, but may become more vocal again if the parties proceed without taking Azerbaijan's interests into consideration. The United States should play the role of "referee," rather than mediator, with Washington dictating to the parties terms of resolution based on "international law." Mammadov complained that the U.S. wants Azerbaijan to raise its military to NATO standards, but won't allow Azerbaijan to purchase American weaponry. End Summary.

#### Positive Assessment of Afghanistan Speech

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12. (C) EUR/CARC Director Ethan Goldrich expressed gratitude to Presidential Administration Foreign Policy Advisor Novruz Mammadov for Azerbaijan's contributions to coalition efforts in Afghanistan and asked for the GOAJ's assessment of President Obama's December 1 speech on a new strategy for the war in Afghanistan. Mammadov said that Azerbaijan recognizes that the war in Afghanistan is "not only a U.S. fight" but a mission that demands contributions from all nations. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Azerbaijan was one of the first nations to respond, with former President Heydar Aliyev pledging to cooperate. That pledge has led to 90 troops on the ground and other areas of cooperation ranging from training to provision of medicines to the building of schools.

13. (C) Azerbaijan also allows U.S. military aircraft to flyover its territory, with personnel and hazardous cargo, and supports the Northern Distribution Network via the Port of Baku. Mammadov said that Azerbaijan is exploring other areas for cooperation, though he did not comment on prospects for a Train and Equip Program, now being reviewed by the Foreign Ministry.

#### NK Non-Resolution Hampering Cooperation

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14. (C) Mammadov quickly turned the conversation to Nagorno-Karabakh, noting Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's

December 7 visit to Washington. Azerbaijan's leadership acknowledges that the Turkey-Armenia normalization process is resulting in additional U.S. attention to the NK conflict, with "everything intensified." Now is the time for resolution, he said. Azerbaijan depends on the international community, especially the United States, to resolve the conflict. Regarding Turkey-Armenia normalization, Baku sees this process linked to NK resolution, based on repeated statements from Turkey's leadership. Azerbaijan has been "quiet" about normalization over the summer and fall, but won't remain so if Turkey does not keep its promises.

15. (C) Azerbaijan's leadership remains dedicated to integration with the West, with the President and his staff understanding that "improvements need to be made" on democracy. However, the current state of non-resolution, he suggested, prevents further cooperation between the United States and Azerbaijan, including perhaps additional support for Afghanistan, democratic development in Azerbaijan and maybe even realization of a Southern Corridor for natural gas export. Russia and Iran like to point out that the United States "does much to contradict the interests of Azerbaijan," he said.

#### Call for a Stronger U.S. Role

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16. (C) Without directly calling for the end of the Minsk Group process, Mammadov asked for the United States to assume the role of "referee," rather than mediator, in peace talks, with Washington taking the initiative to draw up principles

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for resolution "based on international law." The Minsk Group, as it currently stands, calls for the two sides to come together to resolve the conflict, and this approach has not been effective. The United States, he said, must lead, as Russia and France are incapable of constructive actions. French FM Kouchner's statement at Athens suggesting that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict should be resolved within three months "was not useful."

17. (C) Such U.S.-prepared principles for resolution, Mammadov suggested, would certainly support Azerbaijan's claims to territorial integrity. Beyond the dispute over rights to the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, Armenia is occupying seven of Azerbaijan's territories and "has no legitimate claim" to these lands. The Minsk Group, perhaps, should draft a plan to liberate the seven territories and leave the issue of the NK enclave until later. Mammadov also called for the United States Congress to repeal FSA Section 907, which "unjustly identifies Azerbaijan as an aggressor."

#### Bloggers Over Stated

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18. (C) Goldrich raised the cases of Emin Milli and Adnan Hajizade, who were charged with hooliganism and recently sentenced to prison. The United States hopes that the appeals process will work quickly and justly to review their cases, and President Aliyev should consider pardoning the two youth activists. Their continued imprisonment, Goldrich said, damages the reputation of Azerbaijan in the West, and diverts attention from other issues. Mammadov, in turn, complained that the foreign media is writing too much about the cases of the bloggers, and not enough about Nagorno-Karabakh. When Karabakh is discussed in the Western media, the story is distorted, as in the case of EuroNews. "Why is there so much focus on two youth activists and so little attention given to one million refugees?" he asked. "The United States comes here to tell us to release two bloggers, but you won't go to Armenia to demand withdraw from the occupied territories." Mammadov said that he privately lobbied for their release, but other forces in the government have argued that the United States uses this issue to harm Azerbaijan's image. He concluded, suggesting that Azerbaijan

wants to cooperate with the United States, but U.S. criticism is not productive and does not bring about positive results.

#### High Level Visits to Azerbaijan, Weapon Sales

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¶9. (C) Mammadov noted that Secretary Clinton had traveled to Zurich in October for the signing of the protocols, and there she had met with Armenian Foreign Minister Nalbandian. Meanwhile, a U.S. Secretary of State had not visited Azerbaijan in nearly 15 years. Russia and others frequently send high level visitors, and Azerbaijan is commonly invited to join the Collective Security Treaty Organization. At this time, however, CSTO membership remains unappealing for Azerbaijan, Mammadov acknowledged. Meanwhile, the United States wants Azerbaijan to raise its military to NATO standards, but no NATO member has authority to sell weapons to Azerbaijan. Rather, Baku must rely on "Kalashnikovs," he said.

Comment: Mammadov in Rare Form

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¶10. (C) Mammadov was highly animated and excitable in meeting with Goldrich, speaking bluntly, without notes and, at times, seemingly thinking out loud. His proposal for a U.S.-dictated settlement of NK is not entirely new, but it is not commonly shared with Washington visitors. It is interesting that Mammadov believes that terms of resolution developed by a Washington "referee" would wholly support Azerbaijan's contentions, in line with "international law." It is also interesting that Mammadov refrained from criticism of Moscow, which is typically a target of his rhetoric. In extensive interviews the following day with the Azerbaijani press, Mammadov struck a much calmer and more balanced tone, referring to "positive dynamics" at Athens and Munich and refraining from criticism of the Minsk Group.

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¶11. (U) This cable has been cleared by EUR/CARC Director Goldrich.  
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